

What We Believe

The Church of God believes in the principle of openness to all affirmations of the Christian faith which are expressions of the biblical revelation. The intended unity among Christians is not based on the achievement of full agreement on all theological questions. Rather, it is based on a common membership in the church through the grace of God and is anchored by a common commitment to the centrality of Christ and the authority of the Word of God. (From the COG Website at www.chog.org)

The Church of God movement has maintained a sure belief that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is our rule of faith. The following statement of belief is from "What We Believe: A Confession of Christian Faith According to Scripture" -From Church of God at the Crossroads by Dr. Gilbert Stafford. Scripture quotes are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Section 1.01 God and Salvation

- (a) We believe in the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (see Matthew 28:19).
- (b) Along with the ancient people of Israel, we confess that "the LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).
- (c) In agreement with the New Testament church, we confess that "Jesus is Lord" (I Corinthians 12:3).
- (d) In the words of the ancient church, we confess "that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day" (I Corinthians 15:3-4).
- (e) In harmony with a New Testament hymn of faith, we confess that Jesus Christ "is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers-all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross" (Colossians 1:15-20).
- (f) We have been buried with Christ "by baptism into death, so that, Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).
- (g) We rejoice at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and experience the fulfillment of Jesus' promise when he said, "the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you" (John 14:26).
- (h) We hearken to Paul's admonition to "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18), and "to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bear with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3).

(i) We know that as believers we are instructed to present our "bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1). And we trust in the fulfillment of the benediction: "May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

Section 1.02 The Church and Unity

(a) We affirm in the words of Scripture that "there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Ephesians 4:4-7).

(b) In accordance with the guidelines of Scripture, we take delight in the fellowship of God's church, "not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as [we] see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25).

(c) We enjoy singing "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs ... making melody to the Lord in [our] hearts" (Ephesians 5:19).

(d) We are committed to the ministry of anointing "with oil in the name of the Lord," and we believe that "the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven" (James 5:14-15).

(e) We commune at table where our Lord, with broken loaf, says, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me" (I Corinthians 11:24), and, with chalice uplifted, says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (11:25).

(f) We wash each other's feet even as Jesus himself washes our feet to cleanse and renew us for the pilgrim journey of faith (see John 13:1-20).

(g) We are nourished by "the sacred writings that are able to instruct [us] for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). We believe that "all scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work" (3:16-17).

(h) We seek to be part of the answer to our Lord's prayer "that they may all be one". As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21).

(i) We anticipate the time when the church will live out the reality we have in Christ that "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

Section 1.03 Mission and Hope

(a) With gladness, we accept the commission of Jesus to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20).

(b) We desire, as people of the Kingdom, to minister in the name of Christ who, in the words of Isaiah, said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19).

(c) We are committed to the Gospel of the Kingdom, which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

(d) In faith, hope, and love, we look forward to that time when "the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Maranatha "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).